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ON THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY.

[THE following is a portion of another of Dr. T. K. Chambers's Gulstonian Lectures on Corpulence, delivered before the College of Physicians, London, in May last.]

That form of the disease which commences at birth, and goes on increasing during infancy and childhood, is, I believe, so invariably fatal before the age of puberty, that I do not think we have reason for hoping that it is in any way amenable to medicine. At all events, I have not been able to discover any one whose experience has led him to pronounce it curable. It is a form of monstrosity, and as the subjects of it commonly display some other bodily malformation, and a deficiency of intellect, their death is a relief from a miserable prospect.

When it begins in childhood, or about the time of puberty, we must not be deterred by the circumstance of its being hereditary from attempting to remedy the inconvenience arising from it. We cannot truly reduce our patients entirely to the average size and weight, but we may enable them to pass life in comfort and usefulness.

The later the disease commences, the more controllable it is by management, until the middle period of life is passed, and then old age impedes in some degree the benefit which we may confer, not by rendering our measures inert, but by preventing our employing them quite so actively as we should have done earlier.

The first thing indicated in all cases is to cut off, as far as possible, the supply of material. Fat, oil, butter, should be rigorously interdicted in the diet table. But all eatables contain some portion of oleaginous matter, and especially those most convenient to advise the use of for a lengthened period. And, as we observed at the former part of our review of the light which chemistry has thrown on the subject, almost all are capable of a transformation into fat, when a small quantity of this substance is previously present. It is desirable, therefore, that the mass of food should lie in the stomach as short a time as possible, in order that at least a fatty fermentation may not be set up in it. Very light meals should be taken at times most favorable to rapid digestion, and should consist of substances easy of solution and assimilation. To this end, the time of the meals should be fixed for an early hour in the day, before exertion has rendered the powers of the entrails languid and weak. Breakfast should consist of dry toast, or, what is still better, sea-

biscuit, and if much active exercise is intended, a small piece of lean meat. Dinner at 1, on meat with the fat cut off, stale bread or biscuit, and some plain-boiled macaroni, or biscuit pudding, by way of second course.

Liquids should be taken, not at the meal, but half an hour after, so as not to impede the action of the gastric juice upon the mass. Here should end the solid feeding for the day; no second dinner or supper should follow, nor, indeed, any more meals be taken sitting down. A piece of biscuit and a glass of water can be taken standing up if faintness is experienced; a cup of gruel or roast apple before going to bed.

This is not a scale of diet by any means unattainable. A butcher and retired pugilist has adopted it for some years with the greatest comfort to himself. He is able, upon it, to work in the most violent manner in a small garden which he cultivates for himself in the suburbs. He has reduced himself from 20 to 17 stone: whereas his brother, who has not the same strength of mind, has increased to 23 stone in weight. Persons of more refined education ought, and often do, practise the same self-imposed restraint more easily. J. R. has reduced himself from 22 to 18 stone, and sometimes brings himself down to 17, but finds that he derives no particular advantage from being of the lower weight.

The smallest amount of nutriment consistent with the health of the individual can be found by experiment only; but we need not fear that ten ounces of solid food a-day is too little, for the last-mentioned gentleman confined himself for a long period to that quantity, and found his mental and bodily powers always equal to the strain which the pursuit of a laborious profession in London demands. It may be remarked, by the way, that it is often advisable to add a small allowance of malt liquor at dinner, as otherwise the craving of the appetite is less easily appeased. The beers to be avoided are of course the thick, sweet kinds, but that which is thoroughly fermented, at a low temperature, in the Bavarian way, seems to contain very little injurious matter.

I do not know that any advice concerning sleep is peculiarly applicable to obese persons, beyond what we should recommend to all classes of men. A draught of morning dew, "*nocturni roris auram ante solis ortum bibendam*," which Aurelian prescribes for the corpulent, is equally beneficial to every one. They are usually uneasy sleepers, and though lethargic, by no means averse to early rising.

In cases where the fat is largely accumulated in the omentum, it is very convenient for the patient to wear a band round the abdomen, which may be tightened gradually. The support thus given to the abdominal muscles relieves the dragging sensation in the loins, which many persons, whose viscera are heavy in proportion to their strength, experience. It enables exercise to be taken with more facility, and appears also, by pressure, to afford some assistance to the absorption of fat.

The above remarks will apply equally to all forms of obesity; the abstinence recommended can be borne even by the aged, and only comfort be experienced.

As respects exercise, however, a distinction requires to be made. The young and vigorous, whose obesity does not prevent the use of their

legs, cannot employ them more usefully than in walking as long as they are able. The greater number of hours per diem that can be devoted to this exercise, the quicker will be the diminution of bulk. But as riding, by the gentle shaking of the abdomen, excites the secretions of the digestive organs more, it should, where practicable, be employed in addition. Where freedom of motion has once been gained, rowing, shooting, any or all of the forms of British gymnastics, should be adopted as regular habits.

But in the asthenic form of the disease, especially in elderly people, this is scarcely practicable. The defect in muscular power prevents the use of the limbs in walking for a long time enough to be advantageous. But where riding can be managed, it should on no account be omitted, and the suspensory belt before mentioned is often a valuable auxiliary to the employment of this exercise.

The ancients were much more in the habit than we are of using various forms of friction to the skin in treating chronic complaints; and we find in Aurelian a recommendation to the corpulent to employ dry rubbing, either with cloths alone, or with the addition of various powders. Modern habits of cleanliness supersede, in some degree, these remedies. But the skin is not unfrequently greasy from a thick sebaceous secretion, and the circulation through it languid in asthenic obesity, and in these cases horse-hair gloves may be used with great advantage. Dr. Flemyng strongly advises friction to be employed to the trunk of the body as promoting absorption and invigorating the surface. The Greek additions of cold bathing or sponging, especially with sea-water, the vapor or hot-air bath followed by rubbing with salt or with sand, and many other modifications of the same principle enumerated by Aurelian, will naturally suggest themselves to every intelligent patient. The same author very sensibly advises these remedial measures to be employed fasting, and no food to be taken for some time afterwards, and modern habits render before breakfast a convenient time. To these rules of management, medicines, strictly so called, must be viewed as secondary and auxiliary. Unless these laws are obeyed, pharmacopœias are useless.

Purgatives I have generally found not needed in the plethoric form; the bowels usually act once or twice in the day. But in the asthenic obesity of old people, where the abdominal walls are weakened by long pressure of an unnatural weight, it is necessary to employ them.

But there is one class of medicines so universally applicable to all cases of obesity, that I think a trial of them should never be omitted. The chemical affinity of alkalies for fat, point them out as appropriate alteratives in this complaint, and experience proves that they are suitable to the state of the digestive organs. The most eligible one is liquor potassæ, and it may be administered in much larger quantities than any other. If given in milk-and-water, we may safely commence with half a drachm, and raise the dose to a drachm and a drachm and a half three times a day. The milk covers the taste of the potash better than any other vehicle. It has truly the disadvantage of saponifying a portion of the remedy, but there is no evidence to prove that its efficacy is thereby en-

dangered; indeed, soap itself has been strongly recommended. A physician, whose case is recorded by Dr. Flemming (*op. supra cit.*) reduced himself, by alicant soap alone, two stones in weight.

I have often given the above-mentioned doses of liquor potassæ (even to children in cases of scrofula and consumption) without any harm arising from its use, when taken, as desired, in milk. The fear of alkaline medicines has probably arisen from the injury observed by Huxham, to follow the use of Mrs. Stephen's saponaceous mixture, at one time so popular, and therefore often misapplied. The injury appears to have originated from their having been employed in improper cases, such as debilitated gouty subjects, chronic stone in the bladder, and the like, to which of course much harm would be done.

A poor woman, who sold eggs in Chelsea, was becoming quite unable to gain her livelihood by her ordinary occupation. I have not kept a note of her weight and height, and therefore she is not mentioned in the table of cases, but she was extremely obese, and the cause of a variety of symptoms she complained of seemed traceable entirely to the accumulation of fat. By taking liquor potassæ only, without change of diet, she was reduced so far as to carry on her trade with comfort.

Another case was communicated to me the other day, of a gentleman who weighed 19 stone 7 lbs. By regimen, exercise, and liquor potassæ, he was reduced two stone and a half in six weeks.

I have mentioned bleeding, and perhaps that may cause some surprise, after the observations which have been made on the state of the circulation in fat people. But where distinct signs of plethora are present—such as pain over the eyebrows, beating of the temples, restless sleep by night, lethargy by day, with full lips and an elastic skin—it is capable of being employed with safety; and where it is employed, the advantage derived at the commencement of a course of treatment is very great, for it gives all the other remedies a fair start; and by affording immediate relief to many symptoms, gives the patient a favorable opinion of the plan he has undertaken.

On the other hand, it is scarcely necessary to say, that much risk attends the loss of blood; for if the heart has become atrophied and weak, it will not stand the shock. Venesection may cause either sudden death, from failure of the heart's action, or effusion of blood in the brain, from disturbance to the circulation.

Bitter tonics are often of great advantage in enabling the stomach to digest more easily and rapidly, and therefore to be contented with a smaller quantity of really nourishing food. The increase of appetite which they cause does no harm; for when patients are getting better, they are usually more obedient to their medical man, and can be taught to control it. Gratitude for the benefit they have received makes them glad to follow advice, however hard.

Some medicines must now be mentioned, which have been recommended for the cure of obesity, but which analogy and experience do not approve.

Vinegar has been employed by those who are foolish enough to practise upon themselves; but as it produces thinness only by injuring the

digestive organs, the benefit is not worth the price paid for it, and no medical man would ever advise the use of such a remedy.

Iodine has been spoken of as likely to do good, from the power it exhibits of stimulating the absorbents in cases of scrofula and tumors. But its moderate use certainly does not cause the disappearance of healthy fat. Indeed it has been noticed by Lugol, and is matter of daily observation at our metropolitan hospitals, that patients frequently acquire a considerable degree of embonpoint during the time they are taking iodine. The cases of tumors and of fat are very distinct. As Dr. Pereira remarks, "The enlargements which these agents (mercury and iodine) remove, are not mere hypertrophies; their structure is morbid, and they must in consequence have been induced by a change in the quality of the vital activity; in other words, by morbid action. Medicines, therefore, which remove these abnormal conditions, can only do so by restoring healthy action." But the action which causes the deposition of fat in the adipose tissue is, though excessive, of a healthy nature, and harm, rather than benefit, is to be expected from the medicine under discussion; that harm which always accrues from a valuable remedy wrongly employed. I have heard of one case only where it was taken; and in that instance a wise physician who was called in showed his energetic sense of the folly committed, by putting the bottle into the fire.

The hourly watch over the instinctive desires, which must be observed by one desirous of reducing his corpulence, make it a solemn thing to advise the undertaking of the necessary regimen. He that commences it must be taught to view himself as his worst enemy; like the philosopher in Epictetus, he must "mount guard, and lie in constant ambush against himself." All advantages, therefore, should be taken of adventitious circumstances to add importance to the enforcement of the rules; they should be written out clear and exact, and enjoined as strictly as if they were moral precepts. If left to general and verbal instructions, their chance of being observed is small indeed. These are little things, it is true, unless you neglect them.—*London Lancet.*

DEMONSTRATIVE MIDWIFERY.—TRIAL FOR LIBEL.

[THE following is part of the excellent charge of Judge Mullet to the jury, in the case of "the People vs. Dr. Horatio N. Loomis," of Buffalo, for libel. It may be premised that the defendant published an article, in February last, in the Buffalo Courier, reflecting severely upon the Professor of Obstetrics in the Buffalo Medical College, for the course taken by him in the matter of Demonstrative Midwifery, which has been so often alluded to in this Journal. For publishing the article, Dr. L. was indicted for libel, and the trial took place in June last. A verdict of *Not Guilty* was rendered by the jury.]

We will now proceed, under the constant influence of the general principles to which I have adverted, to a brief examination of the more particular rules which govern the case under consideration. This is an

indictment for a libel. A libel is defined to be a censorious or ridiculing writing, picture, or sign, made with a mischievous and malicious intent towards government, magistrates, or individuals. *False* is no part of the definition of a libel, for the reason to which I have adverted; though, whether the publication be false or not, may be an important inquiry in reference to the motive of the publication. The first question for your consideration is, is this publication, in its tenor and meaning, libellous; that is, censorious? I do not understand this, nor its allusion to Professor White, to be denied. I presume the defendant would hardly claim that this publication is approbatory. The next question is—did Doctor Loomis, the defendant, publish the article in question? The indictment charges him with writing and publishing it, but the publication is the act which gives efficacy to it as a libel, and proof of this covers the whole charge. If you find, that Doctor Loomis published the article, or caused it or procured it to be published, or circulated, or read it to others for the purpose of giving it publicity, then he published it, and stands responsible for the publication. The evidence on this branch of the case is before you, and its weight and application belong exclusively to you. If you find these facts for the prosecution, you will be compelled to look at the defendant's justification to determine whether the article is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends. I have already endeavored to show you that there are some things, the publication of which cannot be justified, on account of the inutility of such publication, and the unfitness of such subjects for public discussion. I feel it my duty, however, under the circumstances of this case, to except this publication from that class. An article approving of, if not lauding, the demonstration alluded to, had been published in a public newspaper. That paper, or the friends of that publication, could not expect to have an exclusive right to monopolize public opinion on that subject. They had thrown it out for public examination, and every citizen, who had a contrary opinion upon the matter, had a right in a truthful and candid manner, to criticize, disapprove, or even condemn, the transaction which was attempted to be upheld. This circumstance, I think, justified Dr. Loomis in answering the article in the *Commercial Advertiser*, and expressing his opinion with as much freedom and strength, consistently with the truth, as he thought proper to employ. It is, however, a rule of law, that falsehood is always evidence of bad motives, and can never be justified—so that after all the tedious examination and able discussion which this case has called out, it is reduced to one single question. Is the publication, charged as libellous, true or false? This inquiry embraces the whole tenor and meaning of the publication. It is not enough that it is generally founded in truth—that it is based upon a transaction which did really take place; it must be true in its colorings, epithets, and entire meaning.

You must read it in the Jury Box, with the same common-sense understanding as you would read it at your homes, and then compare it with the description of the same transaction which you have received from the witnesses, and the comparison will show the agreement or the difference. As to the description of the manner of the demonstration,

the publication says:—"An open demonstration of obstetrical practice has been made before a class of students. The demonstration consumed nearly or quite eight hours, during a part, at least, of which, the Professor of that branch of medical instruction was present. Delicacy forbids me to touch upon the manner in which these hours were passed. Suffice it to say, that the tedium was relieved by such methods, as a congregation of boys would know well how to employ." You have heard the witnesses testify as to the time occupied by that demonstration, and the manner in which that time was spent, as well as the manner in which the whole clinical lecture was conducted; and are the proper persons, without any intimation from me, to decide whether the publication is, in its description of that matter, true. There is no contradiction or discrepancy among the witnesses on both sides, in reference to the *manner* in which that clinical lecture was conducted, and perhaps the case as it now stands will justify me in saying, that the principal objection to it, by the defendant and those who think with him, is reduced to a disapprobation of the partial personal exposure of the patient, for from two to five minutes during a particular crisis in the parturition.

In the publication, charged as libellous, the demonstration is characterized as an outrage upon public decency, and those who conducted it as perpetrators of the indecency; and in another part of the publication, it is spoken of as unworthy of the sacred cause of science, and a precedent for outrage indiscriminate. I refer to those parts of the publication solely for the purpose of calling your attention to the inquiry whether they are true in reference to the publicity of the affair alluded to and its tendency to outrage public decency. We have already seen what constitutes an offence against public decency and public morals, and you are to compare the character given to the transaction at the College, by the publication, with the facts as they took place there, and decide whether the publication is, in these respects, true. It is not my desire to examine or criticize the several parts of this publication. I call your attention to the prominent features of it merely for the purpose of pointing out the character of the questions presented to you by this case. But on the part of the defendant it is asserted, that the demonstration was unnecessary and useless as a means of imparting knowledge in the theory or practice of obstetrics, and therefore that the exhibition, before a class of students, was a wanton innovation in the manner of teaching, injurious to the moral delicacy and sensibility of the class, and deserving of the character given to it in the publication. While on the other side it is claimed, that such demonstrations are highly useful as a means of instruction, long and generally practised in European schools; that they will, with the assistance of an experienced teacher, give to the student of obstetrics that kind of information which he may otherwise be obliged to acquire in actual practice, at the risk of his patients—that, when they are made with the voluntary consent of the subject, with the decorum and propriety of manner to be expected from a professor and class of advanced students, they deserve commendation rather than censure; and that the character imputed to *this*, in the publication, is false and libellous.

Several of the most prominent members of the medical profession, of

both American and foreign education, have been examined as witnesses on the respective sides of this question, and their examination has been extended even to the proprieties and decency of private practice. You have patiently heard all this testimony, the most, if not the only important part of which is that which relates to the utility and propriety of demonstrative midwifery as a means of instruction. We all have a deep interest in the integrity and skill of the medical profession, a profession to which we are obliged to confide the objects most dear to us in life. Therefore we feel and acknowledge the propriety of the use of all legitimate and appropriate means of acquiring that skill upon which our happiness and hopes may in a great measure depend. The world of suffering humanity are much indebted to the sleepless enterprise and ingenuity which is constantly employed in inventing means and instruments to discover, overcome or alleviate, those disorders to which our physical natures are subject. It is true that the application and use of some of those means and instruments, which we have heard described, during the free and unrestrained examination of this case, may appear to be shocking to moral delicacy and modesty; and there is reason to fear that hundreds of these frail and fair beings, on whom the refinement and happiness of social life so essentially depend, yearly go down to premature graves under the influence of those false ideas of delicacy and modesty. We all know that beauty, delicacy, modesty and virtue, cannot save their possessors from disease, pain and death; and it is the duty of the fair invalid, if not for her own sake, for the sake of those who love her, and whose happiness depends so much upon those kind offices which she alone can perform, to submit to such curative means as the necessity of her case may demand. The necessity and propriety of the means, she must confide to her physician. It is, therefore, highly important that the physician should have the moral and professional qualifications to render him worthy of the sacred trust. In this submission the fair patient does not discard her delicacy, sensibility and modesty; these guardians of female virtue may be compelled to step back for the occasion, but they stand around her like Diana's Nymphs while she is bathing; and let the practitioner make one significant manifestation of an unholy thought, and they rally around the insulted one, and the wretch is expelled from the confidence he has abused, and ultimately from the profession he has disgraced.

There is one character given by the publication to the demonstration alluded to, which I am glad that no witness or advocate has attempted to justify. I refer to those expressions which impute to the demonstration a quality or tendency to excite or satisfy in the class a *meretricious* curiosity, or to gratify their salacious stare. These expressions convey a slander upon human nature, and all the representatives of low and vulgar thoughts, which, although they may have been drawn from a mind generally deep and pure, must have been accidentally taken from its dregs. It is unnatural and impossible that the pains, agonies and contortions of a parturient woman should excite in the mind of a human being libidinous sensations, or create any other feelings than those of sympathy, pity, and a profound and reverential wonder why she should be

doomed by nature to accomplish the great object of her existence through sorrow, pain, and even danger and death. I sincerely hope that Dr. Loomis did not appreciate these loathsome expressions, when he encouraged or approbated the publication containing them. It cannot be that he intended such an imputation upon the tendencies of a profession of which he is himself a prominent and honorable member. If true, it is as applicable to the profession in practice, as to a class of graduating students; as applicable to a class the day after graduating, as it was the day before. Miserable indeed would be the relation between the public and that highly useful and honorable profession, if such suspicion had any foundation in truth. But reason, as well as common observation, unite in refuting the slanderous imputation. It is inconsistent with that uniform relation between cause and effect which is manifested in all the works of nature, that disease, pain and the loathsome accompaniments of sickness should excite sensations agreeing only with health and vigor. Besides, it is believed that the medical profession, for honor, integrity and chastity, will not suffer by a comparison with any other profession or class of community equally numerous.

REMOVAL OF A LARGE PORTION OF THE TONGUE FOR CANCER.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

I was consulted, in July, by a gentleman residing in the east part of the State, respecting a disease of the tongue, of two years' existence. The organ presented an ulcerated surface, with thickened edges covering the principal part of its right side, and extending back to the palatine arch. The pain was inconsiderable, but the ulcer had within a few weeks made more rapid progress, and the induration was extending, though fortunately more in an anterior direction than towards the pharynx; the left half was apparently in a perfectly healthy condition. As every rational method of treatment had failed, and the patient was anxious for its removal before surgical assistance must necessarily be ineffectual, and as the glands appeared sound and the diseased mass might be circumscribed, I assented to the patient's wish, and performed the operation necessary, July 13th, by ligature and the bistoury. It was done in the following manner, with the assistance of Drs. A. Welch, A. K. Smith, and A. S. Warner. A strong curved needle, similar to that of Petit, having an eye near the point, was threaded with saddler's silk, and thrust through the tongue from below upward and backward in the median line, between the two ranine arteries, the point entering as far back as possible behind the lower teeth, and appearing on the dorsum about three inches from its point, as drawn out by a towel to prevent slipping. With this silk, a strong ligature was drawn through doubled, which was divided, leaving two ligatures in its place. Using these to draw forward the organ, the tongue was transfixed by a curved bistoury, its point entering a little anterior to the ligatures below, and appearing on the dorsum half an inch anterior to them, and split to its apex, the incision inclining, however, a little to the right side, in order to save a

small portion which was sound. In doing this, the right ranine artery was divided and required a temporary ligature. An incision was now made, four lines deep, behind the cancerous mass, as a sulcus into which the ligature might fall which was to embrace the root. This ligature was then tied firmly with a single knot, and secured by a double canula slipped down upon it; the other ligature was then tied firmly with a double knot. The wound bled freely for a short time, and gave some uneasiness to the patient from the difficulty of ejecting clots from the fauces. The pain was severe for a few hours, particularly at the back of the neck, at the os hyoides, and along the track of the stylo-glossus muscle and hypo-glossal nerve, but by evening this had greatly subsided and he passed a quiet night and was much more comfortable the next day than I had expected to find him.

On the 14th, after feeding him with liquid food, the lower ligature was tightened, with a repetition of the pain in the neck and throat; which, however, subsided sooner than on the previous occasion.

On the 16th, I found that although many parts of the surface of the tongue were sloughy, and there was apparently no sensation, yet rosy spots, which had the appearance of possessing vitality, were discoverable; the ligature was therefore again drawn as tightly as possible. The pain returned as before, but was quieted after a time by ice held in the mouth and applied to the neck and throat. I was afraid that, owing to the difficulty of deglutition on the previous occasions, it would be now necessary to feed him through a tube; but this fear was, happily, not realized.

On the 17th he was quite easy, and took enough of nourishment, while all appearance of vitality had vanished from the tongue, now very offensive.

On the morning of the 22d, finding the ligature nearly through, and the pressure of the dead mass irksome, I removed the whole piecemeal, leaving a healthy granulating wound.

I had the pleasure of seeing this operation, in 1843, performed by Mr. O'Ferrall, an able surgeon of St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin, though in his case less of the tongue was removed. He adopted a practice which had been recommended, substituting annealed silver wire for the ligature; but as the wire broke on twisting, it was removed with difficulty, and the ligature employed as formerly. Mr. O'Ferrall then advised that an incision should be made, to lodge the ligatures, and prevent slipping, though it was not done in his case. This advice I followed out, making the anterior one, from which there was no fear of hæmorrhage, so long and deep as greatly to facilitate the removal of the cancer and mitigate the suffering of the patient. The ligatures were inserted before the incisions were made, to give a more complete control of the tongue.

The gentleman left, a few days after, for his residence, the wound rapidly healing and presenting in every way a favorable appearance.

Hartford, Ct., Aug. 13, 1850.

P. W. ELLSWORTH.

POPULAR PHYSIOLOGY.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

It hath been said, and with truth, that a "little knowledge is dangerous." But whether the fault is in the "little knowledge," or the *vacuum* into which it is received, deponent saith not. It behooves all seekers after knowledge, whether true or spurious, to know this, that there is a point of danger—an ordeal to be passed, or at least arrived at, from which no one is exempt. He who would have much learning, must first be a sophomore. He who *gets* much learning, passes rapidly the "dangerous point," and scarcely discerns its fog in the distance. He who stops here, because he can get no further, has his *vacuum* full, and can imbibe no more. He who stops here to breathe, finds his goal; contented, self-satisfied, he desires no more, and he gets no more. All such are "*flats*," and so will ever remain.

Drink deeply, or taste not, lest you be one of the pedant tribe, and gape at mankind for ignorance of the element you have just learned; not dreaming that it and much more was known to them from babyhood, or that a camel has passed your pharynx; which camel is a hobby, that, fortunately, is sure to be ridden to death at last. The true sun light such men cannot see, but only *gas light*. Its coruscations break forth with a vividness that makes all others dim—though invisible to men with good eyes, and all others but the shortsighted. Ephemeral bubbles, long since exploded, rise to the surface, to be again inflated to bursting, and spatter their spray on zealous resurrectionists. The darling but ungrateful phantom disappears without residuum in a twinkling, leaving its astonished and mortified champion with nothing to defend but himself; the harder task of the two, and quite impossible. Henceforth he cannot be trusted for guidance, since to him all true light is darkness. His, is only marsh light, which is sure to plunge him and all others that follow, up to the chin in the mud and water over which it flourishes. Yet there is little blame for him, but pity for his idiosyncrasy.

Premising this, what a nuisance is physiology in common schools and common lecture-rooms. What an abomination are all these self-styled "doctors," going about preaching their balderdash "physiology," aided by innumerable newspaper puffs, certificates from (yet unborn) M.D.s and humbug mannikins. With these means they fleece crowds of men and women of time, thoughts and money wanted for more palpable purposes. With what commendable alacrity, hocus pocus, or legerdemain act of some kind, are the "only twelve and a half cents" withdrawn from human view, and safely ensconced in strong pockets. This preliminary over, the "lecture" begins; which means that the audience, with becoming gravity, and a sense of weighty responsibility, are informed that they are all "fearfully and wonderfully made"; whereat they are set all agog, and await with impatience the revelation of "awful disclosures." Next, a mysterious-looking coffee-bag, or some such thing, is removed, thereby exposing to view the wonderful "mannikin," which the audience are informed is a fac simile of a man; a piece of information much needed—for if like a man at all, it must be him of the moon

or other planet than this, since no such biped has yet been seen on this mundane sphere. Next comes the "dissection," which is accomplished manually, while by vocal means the recipients of knowledge are made to realize how much tribulation has been suffered (to obtain the mannikin) for their entertainment and instruction. A fact which cannot be doubted, for one can hardly rid himself of the idea that the possessor is guilty of having clandestinely abstracted its materials from some unfortunate toy-shop. Skin, muscle, bones, &c., are in succession learnedly demonstrated, until by these gradual means the unsophisticated audience are duly prepared to behold that most wonderful of all phenomena, to wit, the heart *in situ*. With protruded eyes, and mouths that threaten to swallow something more palpable than "instruction," the gaping victims are aghast at what looks for all the world like an apple dumpling.

Here, or about here, the lecture closes; the whole having been interspersed with vulgar anecdotes, said to be witty; by which it is clearly shown that all educated physicians are, and have been for two thousand years, a set of hygienic highwaymen—gull-catchers, who by means of their *pulveres*, *pilule*, *tincture*, black coats, painted buggies, and such like trash, have all this time robbed and gulled this gullible race: ergo, they (the Drs.) are a superfluity, a bane, a parasitic scourge, needed no more than a tree needs caterpillars. Away with them! What is more easy, forsooth, than for every man to be his own doctor, since no specific is needed, but only a panacea, furnished at a cheap rate? Yes! when each man can be the maker of his own watch, his own newspaper, his own almanac, but not till then, or rather not *even* then, can he be his own doctor.

Now, more good is done by the said anecdotes than was at first intended, since they elucidate the lecturer more than the lecture. *He* is to all men of sense the true "gull-catcher," a sycophant, a feeder of vulgar ignorance, of base prejudice and baser passion, so that he may thereby feed himself. To men of weak minds, he is a pioneer reformist, a self-devoted philanthropist, deemed by them worthy of windy "resolutions," silver medals and such-like trinkets. By the way, this difference of opinion is pathognomonic, whereby men of sense may be at all times diagnosed from men of nonsense and imbecile minds; a fact which cannot be hidden, and of which much use ought to be made.

Now it is plain that this kind and mode of teaching is only evil, and that continually. To the profession, and such men as do not assume to be what they are not, it is annoying and savors of disgust. But the ignorant, the novelty-seeking and dotard, see what it does to him. With what anxious solicitude and pious devotion he wastes his time, and what scrap of intellect he has. It is to him a matter of conscience—aye, it is his religion, of more consequence to him than pure gospel; he knows no higher salvation than that of the body; he cares little what food nourishes the soul, if the stomach gets its proper *pabulum*:—holiness, versus beef and potatoes. The bible is to him of little worth, compared with knowledge got from quack advertisements and pamphlets adorned with cuts said to resemble livers, lungs, windpipes, &c., for these are the sum of his knowledge. But his piety does not make him selfish; for his

morbid feelings flow out as certainly as they flow in. That men are such hardened sinners as to swallow their beef and potatoes without knowing or caring what becomes of them, is to him a source of deep regret. Determined he is, that such as he can control *shall* know what becomes of them; and what the stomach, liver, spleen, and other viscera have to do therewith. The stomach! forsooth, what does *he* know of it, except as a convenient place to put such food in as he may find himself able? Of the liver, he has ocular demonstration, since being a liver himself, he meets it anon in his masticatory exercises. Of the spleen, he knows there is one, from the ominous function it is said to perform. This constitutes the sum total of his knowledge, anatomical and physiological, for with all his profundity he could not for the life of him tell what his pancreas does, or even that he had one. With what perseverance and pseudo-kindness he instils his "religion" into his children—with quack pamphlets for a catechism, and some half-fledged "popular physiology" for a bible; not only depriving them of useful instruction or healthy recreation, but inflicting them with an unmeaning conglomeration of words—torturing their vocal apparatus into most unnatural and fantastic shapes, which seriously threaten maxillary luxation.

The proverb that "we cannot know too much," has of late so obtained, as to grossly misdirect many, to the no small injury of themselves and others. They forget, or never knew, that counter-proverb, that "we cannot know everything." Hence they deem it of little consequence with what they begin; whether with the most abstruse science or the elements of education. Whether with Greek, Latin, chemistry, physiology, or the alphabet and multiplication table. They would have pupils "*finish* their education" before it is begun, and make it a jumble of rubbish. A church is not complete without a tower; yet who thinks of building this first of all, or even last of all, unless the substructure and furniture has been first provided for. Try it and see what would come of it, besides a bona fide "jumble of rubbish;" precious little, be assured. Besides, what if this appendage be not erected at all? are not all the purposes (except show) for which the structure was intended, answered as well? So in the structure of education, let us lay the foundation deep and strong, erect the main building, and furnish it, before we begin to *tower*.

No disparagement is here meant to the higher branches of learning—far from it. But they should be *added* to the practical and fundamental, not *substituted* for them. Now this custom of teaching shallow brains, and children, physiology by means of prelectors and school-masters, or by any means whatsoever, is absurd. Shallow brains and children—for none but these are found among its victims; since all men of sagacity and good sense have an eye to what may be useful in some possible way. It is to these latter men that we are to look for whatever is to be done towards removing this absurdity. That despised species, called swine, have at least one amiable quality, viz., that of contentedly feasting on whatever is set before them, without regard to quality or flavor: never turning up the nose, unless it be to open the mouth the wider. Equally insensible is the mental palate of many honest, weak-minded persons, who eagerly de-

vour whatever mental food is set before them, caring little for condiments unless they be of stimulant or saccharine nature. This fact is of utmost importance—worthy of serious consideration by State legislators and school committees—men who have the power, in no small degree, of regulating the mental diet of the honest ignorant and of children; the only ones liable to suffer from this huge mistake. It is only by taking advantage of the fact just named, that there is any discernible hope of remedying the evil we are now deprecating. Using argument or moral suasion to induce dumb canis not to eat poisoned meat, would be folly; if you would save him, take it away and give him good meat. So in supplying the mental palate of such as have no choice of their own, give them what they can digest and assimilate—what will nourish and fertilize the mind and prepare it for more intricate knowledge; not what will confuse and derange the thinking powers, stunting their growth and producing *mental dyspepsia*.

Precisely *how* the mouths of these erratic prelectors are to be stopped, does not yet appear. If they must have their livelihood, and will not have it except by false pretence, some provision should be made for them by the State, whereby it might be honestly earned, by some useful employment, as picking stone or oakum. No one yet thinks them worthy of a residence in the State Mansion at Charlestown, with food and raiment (*panis et aqua, braccæ albæ et rubeæ*) provided to hand. Yet, a home furnished for them in some less noted Institution, under protection of Government, would doubtless be beneficial to them and of infinite service to others.

I. F. GALLOUPÉ.

Lynn, August, 1850.

DROPSY OF THE SCALP.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—If you think the subjoined case of sufficient interest, you may admit it into your Journal.

Called to attend on Mrs. W., in confinement with her sixth child. Found vertex presentation, face looking forward, puffiness of scalp, bones of head hardly to be felt. Labor made slow advances, and soon the head came to fill the inferior strait so completely, that after waiting four hours I found that no progress had been made. Satisfied that the effused fluid was the obstructing cause, and laceration of the perineum to be feared if the head passed as it was, I decided to puncture the head, which I did over the anterior fontanelle, when there was a gush of water. Labor advanced, and in twenty minutes was completed. The child was born alive, and the dropsy is entirely removed, although for some days a continuance of fifteen minutes in one position would cause a collection of quite a quantity in the depending part of the head. The mother is a very small woman, and the weight of her other children at birth was between 4 1-2 and 5 1-2 lbs. This one was 10 lbs. There was no action of the kidneys for the first twenty-four hours.

Query—What was the origin of this water?

Hebron, N. H., August 2, 1850.

T. GILMAN SIMPSON.

 THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

 BOSTON, AUGUST 21, 1850.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Brussels.—In ten hours and a half, the traveller is conveyed from Paris to the capital of Belgium, a beautiful, quiet, industrious city, presumed to have about 150,000 inhabitants. The distance between the two cities is 229 miles. Such fields of rye, oats, and other grains, as may now be seen the whole distance, ripening for the harvest, are not frequently met with. It is not uncommon to pass thirty or forty acres of poppies, which are extensively cultivated through the whole northern part of France. Immense fields of red-beet are also growing, neatly weeded and thrifty. They are probably for the sugar manufacturers. Fields are neither divided, nor the landscape marred by fences, in any direction. By the side of the railway track there is a slight barrier of small stakes; but otherwise, as far as the eye reaches, on either side, not a hedge, ditch, wall, bush or divisional line between estates can be seen. The appearance is much like that of the beautiful prairie regions on the Iowa side of the Upper Mississippi.

This Brussels, called by the people themselves *Bruxelles*, is a babel of languages—almost every tongue being spoken. It is a source of amusement to a new comer to listen to a conversation between persons from different countries—for it scarcely matters in what dialect an answer is given to any question, as each one appears readily to understand the other. All eatables and drinkables, before passing the gates to feed the residents of the city, pay a tax, collected on the spot daily, which is a source of great revenue, and constitutes a part of the ways and means of conducting the municipal affairs. The same kind of tax is collected at Paris—the income being a vast sum annually—technically called the *octroy*, or king's eighth. Were the country marketmen disposed to show a decided hostility to this shameful imposition, and simply remain at home two successive days, the empty stomachs of a million and a half of people in the one city, and 150,000 in the other, would perhaps lead to a repeal of this obnoxious ordinance. A preparation of passports, and the detention of a train of cars, filled with strangers from all sections of the civilized world, till their trunks, one by one, are taken into a building and examined by various officials wearing bear-skin caps, pewter buttons and red cotton epaulettes, who thus make a show of the mighty consequence of the kingdom, are annoying almost beyond endurance. When fairly in the city, however, various objects of interest soon offer a kind of compensation for the trial passed through on the way. Lace-making, on the whole, is the most extraordinary of all the manufacturing carried on in Brussels. A comparatively small building, visited to-day, employs, in and about, said the man of the yardstick, thirteen hundred females, whose average daily wages, for fourteen hours labor, was seventy-five centimes, equivalent to only fifteen cents. One collar, now being made, scarcely two inches wide, by a quarter of a yard in length, will require nine months to complete it. It is ruinous to the eyes, yet no complaint was uttered in regard to the influence of the business upon the general health of the poor operatives. Two American ladies, present on

the same occasion, said that laces like those exhibited to them were not seen in the United States. Few or none could afford to purchase them, and hence they are principally disposed of among the nobility of Europe, whose wealth is equal to the demands of taste and luxury. A magnificent bronze statue of Vesalius, stands in one of the public squares. The inscription is quite indistinct; but a courier, a travelling servant of the writer, said it was *one grand doctor who made de first markery—de man what invented an-a-tom-y.*

Among the institutions which exhibit to advantage the christian charity of the metropolis, are the hospitals. St. John's is a model edifice, and comes nearer to the external and internal organization of the Massachusetts General Hospital, than any other yet seen. Six hundred patients can be well accommodated. Three hundred are not very frequently registered at any one time. Fractures are admirably managed with gutta percha splints. A mass of gum is perpetually kept in hot water, for instant use. The bones are placed as they should be, kept in position, and the soft gum fitted to one side, generally the under. As soon as it cools, it becomes as firm as plaster, and then the upper half is moulded in the same manner. No bandages are required—and one of the advantages of the gum splint is, that either half can be removed for inspecting the condition of the part, without disturbing the process in which nature is engaged. St. Peter's is another large, well-ordered hospital, creditable to the country. Dr. Seutin is the leading surgeon of the city—being referred to as a very distinguished operator. Dr. Wytterhoeven is the first surgeon of St. John's Hospital.

In Brussels there is a University organized for giving a thorough and polished education. A school of medicine is embraced within its charter, having a strong and learned faculty. Lectures are given, in the proper season, and well sustained. To become a doctor of medicine is no everyday matter: there are two terrible examinations. Dissections are prosecuted even at this time, the middle of July, which shows that all the ardor in anatomical pursuits is not confined to Paris. A catalogue of the professors could have been given, but they are intolerably difficult to pronounce, and far from being easy to write. A poorer cabinet of anatomy, morbid specimens, and wax models, has not come under recognition in any country. Some effort should be made to have the collection more worthy of the reputation of the medical department of the university.

Possibly some of the communications to the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, from Europe, may have miscarried. If so, future recollections must supply any links in the chain which may be necessary. Whether or not mention has heretofore been made of the Institute of France, is out of mind;—however, it is not much out of order to remark, in this place, that in point of dignity, while in session, that very grave and learned body will not compare with the Royal Society of London. The meetings are held, in Paris, in an enormously large building, laden with pictures, statuary and books, perpetuating the expressions of countenance, and the literary and scientific fame, of Frenchmen. All the world is permitted to be present, on side benches, till some business exclusively of a private nature is called up, when the vulgar spectators are requested to retire. Those having discoveries to announce, processes in the arts to develop, or, in short, any thing to say or do for the advancement of science, go there and read their own papers, the members sitting patiently while many a soporific dose is administered by ambitious aspirants for fame. M. Elie de Beaumont, at the head of the School of Mines, a modest, excellent man, in private con-

versation spoke of Dr. Chas. T. Jackson, of Boston, in terms of warm commendation, as being highly esteemed as a chemist and geologist—and further observed, the Institute had awarded him a sum of money, the maximum amount ever given to a great discoverer. Etherization and Boston are words intimately connected in the minds of foreigners interested in that most extraordinary aid to surgery. On learning the address of a Bostonian, "What!" they will say, "where ether was first employed?" Or, "O yes, Boston, celebrated for the discovery of the true use of ether," &c.

When the Royal Society is in session, at the apartments in Somerset House, London, a monstrously large gilded crown is placed on the table, and a small gold salver with three golden cups upon it. The secretaries sit while reading papers sent to the society—and being mercifully disposed, generally read only the title, and give in a few words a synopsis of the contents. The president, presiding with his hat on, rises on the conclusion of the secretary, and says in a small, almost inaudible voice—"Shall thanks be given to Mr. — for this paper?" and resumes his comfortable chair. Lord Rosse, the president, is known abroad for the devotion he has paid to the advancement of astronomical science, by the construction of a monster telescope. The elder Herschel's forty foot telescope lies on the ground at Slough, on the road from London to Windsor Castle, divested of its reflectors and external rigging. At a little distance it resembles a steam-boiler.

Digressions being allowable under the circumstances attending the writing of this and former notes, it may be mentioned here that the National Assembly of France, was visited and found to be more noisy than the English House of Commons, and was inferior in dignified deportment to any legislative body in the American Union, when an excitement has been created. The president has a good sized bell before him on the table, which he rings to preserve order, by touching a lever, as often as the din of voices becomes too much for his own ears. Each speaker goes from his seat to the tribune, a mere desk, a few feet lower than the presiding officer's, and faces the members, as often as he addresses the house.

Writing Prescriptions in English.—In consequence of the liability of apothecaries to misunderstand the wants of the physician when his prescription is written in Latin, and for the further simplifying of the medical and chemical nomenclature, it has been suggested, by some of our distinguished physicians, that the writing of all prescriptions in plain English might obviate many of the existing difficulties. At the meeting of the American Medical Association which was held in Boston last year. Dr. John Ware, of this city, brought the matter before the Association, and also advocated the movement at the last meeting of the Suffolk District Medical Society. A Committee was chosen by this Society to consider the expediency of adopting the English language in writing prescriptions, and of simplifying the nomenclature of chemical and elementary medical substances. This Committee consists of Drs. John Ware, D. H. Storer and Geo. Stevens Jones, who are to report at the next meeting of the society. To depart from ancient custom, and begin *de novo* in our method of prescribing, certainly demands careful consideration. In the first place, will the proposed change make the prescription more intelligible, or the apothecary better qualified to dispense it? And secondly, will not this very innovation have a bad tendency upon the minds of the patient? Would not many of our patients object to taking calomel, when they would not object

to sub-murias hydrargyri? The practitioner who enjoys a high reputation, and who has a choice of practice, and besides is independent in pecuniary matters, can generally make his patients do as he pleases; but the young and almost penniless physician has every thing to lose, if he offends the patient or his friends. In such cases it may be considered the plan proposed would act unequally. There can be no doubt that the measure has been proposed and advocated for the common good; and if we can be convinced that it would have that tendency, we shall cheerfully lend our aid in the endeavor to accomplish it.

The New Hampshire Journal of Medicine.—This is the name of a new Medical Journal published in Concord, N. H., which is to be devoted to the interests of the profession within the State, and therefore may be strictly termed a State Journal. Its object is truly a good one, and if the profession within its district respond promptly to the appeal made by its editor, there cannot be any doubt that it will take its place among the Journals devoted to similar interests. It is to be edited by Edw. H. Parker, M.D., and published monthly by G. P. Lyon. Price \$1 per year.

Harris's Principles and Practice of Dental Surgery.—This work, by Prof. C. A. Harris, of the Baltimore College of Dental Surgeons, is doubtless the best on dentistry that has ever been published. This is the fourth edition, and is published by Lindsay & Blakiston, Philadelphia, and Phillips & Sampson, Boston. No better evidence of its appreciation by the dental profession can be given, than the demand which it has received since the first edition was published. The present one has been much improved by the addition of several chapters on filling the teeth, and on mechanical dentistry. We believe all that is known upon the science is embodied in the work. The high authority of its author, together with his known zeal in the cause of teaching dental surgery, is sufficient evidence of its correctness, and must cause those who wish to perfect themselves in the dental art, to value it very highly.

Rush Medical College.—The annual commencement of the Rush Medical College, at Chicago, Illinois, session of 1850-51, has been received. It would appear that the trustees and faculty are determined to make their institution attractive to the medical student. The collective fees for the whole course have been reduced to the very low sum of \$35.00, so that all who would be doctors, can have no good reason for neglecting the regular and only true way to acquire a medical education. Those who have made the assertion that none but the *rich* have any chance in passing a medical education, no doubt will be pleased at this announcement of liberality on the part of the trustees and faculty of Rush Medical College. There were 117 matriculants and 42 graduates at the session of 1849-50.

Palsy and Apoplexy.—"On the causes, nature and treatment of palsy and apoplexy, &c. By James Copland, M.D., F.R.S., &c. &c. Philadelphia, Lea & Blanchard. Boston, Ticknor, Fields & Co." This work is eminently adapted to meet the wants of the profession, in aiding them in their diagnosis and treatment of paralysis. Dr. Copland is considered one of the

best pathologists now living, and whatever is written by him can be depended upon as truth. The greater part of this treatise on palsy was published some time since in his Medical Dictionary (which, by the way, is still unfinished); and the remainder formed the Croonian lectures for 1846-47 at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons. The whole, as connected in this volume, will be read with great interest, as its author differs somewhat from other pathologists on the subject discussed, offering many ingenious arguments to explain his theory of the connection between palsy and apoplexy.

Medical Miscellany.—The Board of Health of St. Louis, upon the theory that limestone water causes cholera, have ordered the handles to be taken from the pumps in the city, to prevent the use of such water.—The White House at Washington is said to be so unhealthy as a place of residence, that Mr. Fillmore has hired for the season a small house in Georgetown.—A family in Keeseville, N. Y., were lately poisoned by eating greens made from the leaves of the common rhubarb, or pie-plant. One individual died, and the rest recovered.—A solution of the Rhus copilanus has been successfully used by Dr. Hunton, of Hydepark, Vt., in the treatment of hæmorrhoids—applied with a feather or camel's hair pencil to the tumors.—It is said that Prof. Webster remains calm and apparently resigned, spending much of his time in reading religious books. His family live entirely secluded, and in ignorance of the day appointed for his execution.—The Society of Dental Surgeons, of the State of New York, will meet in the City of New York on the 2d Tuesday of September.—The American Society of Dental Surgeons met at Saratoga on the 2d Tuesday of August.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Dr. Williams's dissertation has been received, and will be inserted.

MARRIED.—In Nantucket, July 20, by Rev. Wm. H. Channing, of Boston, Dr. Wm. F. Channing, of Boston, to Miss Susan Elizabeth Burdick, of Nantucket.

DIED.—At his residence, Worcester, Otsego Co., N. Y., after a severe and protracted illness, which he bore with Christian resignation, Dr. Uriah Gregory Bigelow, aged 55 years.

Deaths in Boston—for the week ending Saturday noon, Aug. 17th, 79.—Males, 44—females, 35. Accidental, 1—disease of the bowels, 6—inflammation of the bowels, 2—disease of the brain, 1—bronchitis, 1—consumption, 5—convulsions, 4—cholera infantum, 4—cancer, 1—canker, 2—croup, 1—dysentery, 17—dropsy, 3—dropsy of brain, 5—drowned, 1—lung fever, 1—hooping cough, 1—inaution, 1—infantile diseases, 5—disease of the liver, 1—marasmus, 2—measles, 1—old age, 2—smallpox, 1—suicide, 1—teething, 6—unknown, 2—ulcers, 1.

Under 5 years, 50—between 5 and 20 years, 4—between 20 and 40 years, 10—between 40 and 60 years, 6—over 60 years, 9. Americans, 37; foreigners and children of foreigners, 42.

The week ending August 18, 1849—257 deaths, of which 111 were by cholera.

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South Carolina Medical College.—The Catalogue of the Trustees, Faculty and Students of the Medical College of the State of South Carolina, and the announcement of the session of 1850-51, has been received. It appears from the circular, that Dr. S. H. Dickson, late of the New York University, has again resumed the Chair of Professor of the Institutes of Medicine. Dr. Dickson is an able lecturer, and the re-appointment to his former position in this school, must be as flattering to him, as his services will prove valuable to his colleagues and the students attending the lectures. The number of students for 1849-50 was 174—62 of whom received the degree of doctor in medicine at the annual commencement.

Spurious Pregnancy, followed by Spurious Parturition.—Dr. KEILLER communicated to the Edinburgh Obstetrical Society the particulars* of a case in which the symptoms of spurious pregnancy, and subsequently, those of spurious parturition, existed to such a remarkable degree, as to induce the patient and her friends not only to prepare for the expected accouchement, but, when the supposed full time arrived, to believe in the actual commencement and continuance of a very painful labor, which ultimately became so protracted as to demand, according to the opinion of the attending accoucheur, the immediate and unavoidable performance of the *Cæsarian section*!

Dr. K., having been requested to visit the case for the purpose of satisfying the friends of the patient as to the propriety of having recourse to such an extreme mode of accomplishing the delivery as that which had been seriously proposed to them by the individual in attendance, was astonished to find, on making an examination, without any misgivings as to the parturient condition of the patient, that all the supposed symptoms of pregnancy and of parturition had been, and were still, *entirely spurious*, the uterus being evidently unimpregnated!

This startling opinion was anything but credited at the time, by the females present, who altogether ridiculed the idea of the case not being one of "*real labor*," as the motions of the child had long been not only distinctly felt but even seen "through the walls of the much-distended abdomen," the patient herself insisting that the child's movements were so violent that she felt "as if it would leap through her side!"

The result of the case, however, sufficiently proved that her painful attempts at delivery could not possibly have been rendered less futile by the *Cæsarian section*, or any other obstetrical aid, as pregnancy never had existed!

The patient remained for a considerable time afterwards under the immediate care of Dr. Keiller, who stated that he considered the entire group of anomalous symptoms (which she presented in a very singular degree, and which he purposes recording) in a great measure referable to hysteria.

Health of St. Louis.—Since our last issue, the bills of mortality have shown a great increase of sickness and death in our city. Disease has, however, been chiefly confined to children and to those living in unhealthy localities, on the outskirts of the city. The cholera which has carried off a large number lately, has not extended beyond the ill-cleansed districts in the north-western portion of the town, and is now represented as rapidly diminishing. It has not yet prevailed, nor is it likely to prevail, as an epidemic here, and with the appearance of cooler weather, it will doubtless subside entirely.—*St. Louis Probe.*